

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 124023

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11 JUN 74 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 124023

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EEC, XF, UNRWA

SUBJECT: EC AID TO UNRWA

REF: EC BRUSSELS 3243

CAIRO ALSO FOR ROSENBLATT FOR ASST. SECY. ATHERTON

1. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S LONG-TERM PLANS TO AID MIDDLE EAST

REFUGEES ARE ADMIRABLE BUT EC'S SENSE OF TIMING, GIVEN
URGENCY OF THE NEEDS, IS UNREAL. NEED

IS NOW AND IT IS PRECISELY "VOLATILE" SITUATION IN THE
AREA WHICH SHOULD PROMPT JUNE 25 COUNCIL SESSION TO ACT
POSITIVELY ON EMERGENCY BUDGETARY AID TO UNRWA. PUTTING
LONG TERM AID TO HEALTH AND EDUCATION ON "BACK BURNER"
UNTIL ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE RESOLVED SEEMS IGNORE FACT
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE NEEDED NOW, BEFORE UNRWA FORCED TO
CUT RATIONS AND CLOSE DOWN VALUABLE PREPARATORY
EDUCATION CYCLE.

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2. IN ATTEMPT INJECT SOME SENSE OF URGENCY INTO COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS, YOU SHOULD RAISE ISSUE OF AID TO UNRWA WITH APPROPRIATE COMMISSION OFFICIALS, STRESSING URGENCY OF UNRWA'S NEED, EFFORTS OF SYG AND UN SPECIAL WORKING GROUP ON UNRWA FINANCES, AND OUR OWN CONTINUING EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE OIL RICH ARABS AND OTHERS TO HELP NOW. THESE EFFORTS HAVE PRODUCED SOME EXTRA ASSISTANCE BUT IT IS MINOR AND EC HELP IS NEEDED NOW. WE OF COURSE ARE EXAMINING WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY BE HELPFUL IN VERY NEAR FUTURE.

3. COMMISSION OFFICIALS MAY HAVE NOTED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE OF ARAB STATES TO LEBANON AND PALESTINIANS FOLLOWING ISRAELI RAIDS BUT IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THESE FUNDS, AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE NOW, ARE BEING CHanneled THROUGH THE GOL AND FEDAYEEN GROUPS AND NOT THROUGH UNRWA WHICH IS UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT RE-BUILDING CAMPS OR EVEN ITS OWN BUILDINGS DESTROYED IN ISRAELI RAIDS.

4. YOU SHOULD INFORM COMMISSION OFFICIALS:

A. THAT SYG HAS APPROACHED MANY UN MEMBERS, INCLUDING U.S. AND EC COUNTRIES, IN ORDER ELICIT ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA IN ORDER AVOID CUTS IN SERVICES TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEES. WE ARE URGENTLY EXAMINING WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY BE HELPFUL IN VERY NEAR FUTURE AND WE HAVE SUPPORTED SYG'S APPEAL, PARTICULARLY WITH OIL-RICH ARAB STATES. COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS TO AID REFUGEES OVER LONG TERM ARE ADMIRABLE BUT, IN SUPPORT OF SYG'S APPEAL, WE HOPE EC WILL HELP UNRWA NOW WITH ITS SHORT-TERM BUDGETARY PROBLEMS.

B. THAT UNRWA COMMISSIONER GENERAL SIR JOHN RENNIE HAS INFORMED ARAB HOST GOVERNMENTS OF UNRWA'S INABILITY TO CONTINUE SERVICES AT PRESENT LEVEL PAST JULY 1 (FOR FLOUR RATION) AND THAT NEXT SCHOOL YEAR WILL NOT INCLUDE PREPARATORY EDUCATION (REMOVING SOME 2,000 PLUS TEACHERS AND 56,000 STUDENTS FROM UNRWA SYSTEM).

C. CUTS OUTLINED IN A., ABOVE, ARE EXPECTED TO SAVE ABOUT
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7.5 MILLION DOLLARS, OUT OF EXPECTED 1974 DEFICIT OF 10.5 MILLION DOLLARS. UNRWA HAS DEFICIT LEFT OVER FROM 1973 OF 3 PLUS MILLION DOLLARS AND ITS WORKING CAPITAL HAS BEEN REDUCED TO 2 MILLION DOLLAR RANGE, WHICH IS INADEQUATE COVER PIPELINE COSTS OVER NEXT TWO-THREE MONTHS. UNRWA'S REAL NEEDS THEREFORE ARE IN 20-30 MILLION DOLLAR RANGE IF SERVICES ARE TO BE MAINTAINED, WORKING CAPITAL RESTORED TO MINIMAL LEVEL, AND BASIC REPAIR AND NEEDED

UPGRADING OF CAMP FACILITIES ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

D. THOUGH EFFORTS IN A NUMBER OF CHANNELS ARE CONTINUING TO INCREASE CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA FROM OIL-RICH ARABS, UNRWA CANNOT WAIT FOR RESULTS, WHICH ARE NOT NOW EXPECTED TO BE ADEQUATE TO THE NEED. WE WOULD HOPE EC WILL RESPOND TO UNRWA'S NEEDS NOW, AT JUNE 25 COUNCIL SESSION, RATHER THAN PURSUE "WAIT AND SEE" APPROACH DESCRIBED REFTTEL, WHICH COULD INVOLVE BOTH HARDSHIP FOR REFUGEES AND INCREASED INSTABILITY IN THE AREA AT A TIME WHEN SEARCH FOR LASTING SETTLEMENT HOLDS GREATER PROMISE THAN EVER BEFORE. SISCO
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